

Lacock Parish Council

Flood Plan

If there is immediate danger to life or property call 999

Jane Durrant

Flood & Emergency Planning

Lacock Parish Council

V3.1 May 2024

Plan distribution list

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Plan amendment list

			Changed by
V0.1	30/11/15	Initial Version	Jane Durrant
V0.2		Incorporating feedback from Renate Malton and LPC.	Jane Durrant
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Parish Council Flood Plan

Introduction to the Flood Plan

The Bristol Avon flows north to south through Lacock Parish. The Byde (Bide) Brook is a significant tributary and flows along the north edge of Lacock village before joining the Avon, northwest of the Abbey. A smaller tributary runs parallel to the north and through Notton.

Pasture land each side of the Avon floods every year from Reybridge southwards. Both road crossings over the Avon may be closed as a result. Exceptional floods have been recorded on the Byde Brook (cf 1935) and these pose a rare but significant risk to the lowest properties in the village.

Additionally there are a large number of ditches and road drains, which if not maintained can become over-whelmed and cause localised flooding of areas of the parish. .

Notes

1. The Flood Plan is intended to act as a guide to actions in the lead up to and during a weather emergency
2. This Flood Plan does not provide information to householders as that information will be supplied by the Parish Council on their website (and through posters/leaflets being made available via the parish council)
3. Lacock Parish Council encourage all owners of property which has previously flooded or is liable to flood, to sign up to the Environment Agency flood alerts service via Floodline.

Disclaimer

Lacock Parish Council accepts no liability for any loss or damage arising directly or indirectly from action taken or not taken in reliance on material or information contained within this Flood Plan, or for any failure to activate the plan or to carry out any planned activities in response to a flood alert or warning issued to or by the Emergency Plan Working Group.

Essential and Medical Services Telephone Numbers

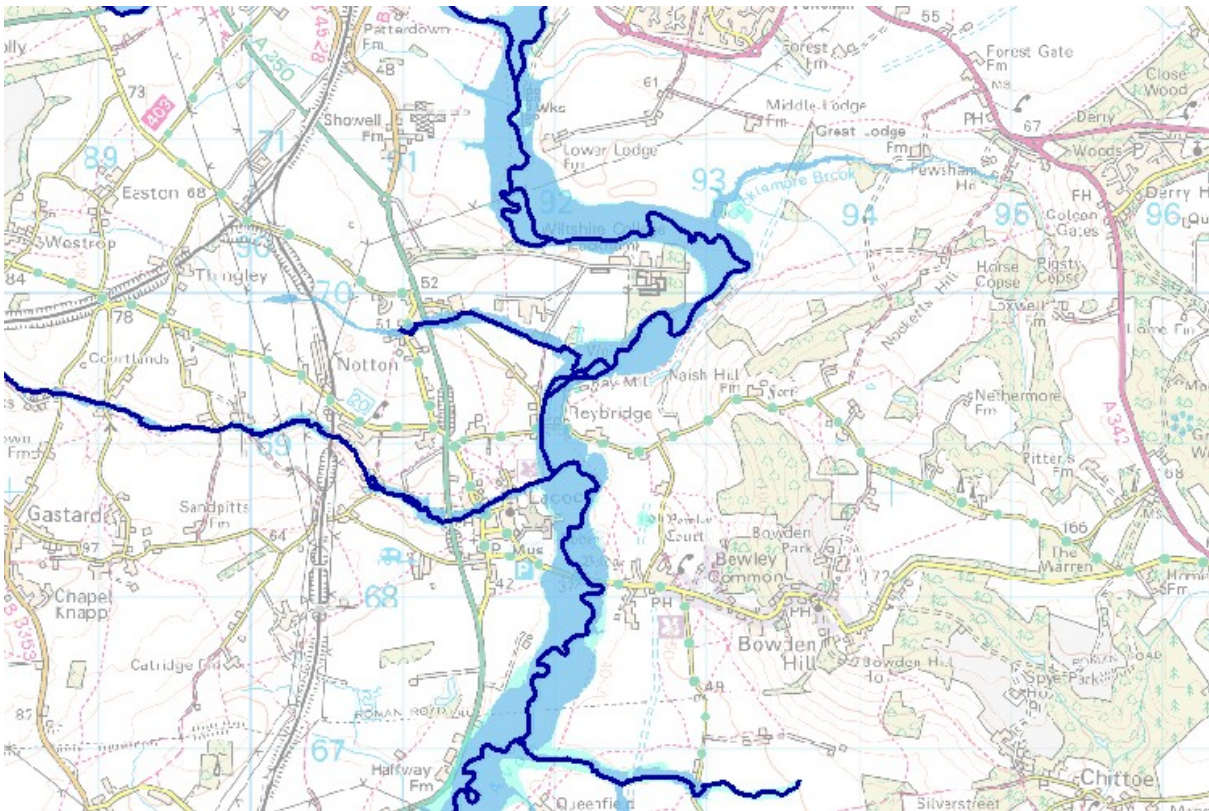
ESSENTIAL SERVICES	
Police Non-emergency Nearest Station:	101 0845 408 7000
Emergency Fire, Police, Ambulance	112 or 999
BT Open Reach	0800 023 2023
Network Rail	08457 11 4141
Gas Emergency (National Gas Emergency Service - All providers)	0800 111 999 (24 hours)
Electricity Emergency (SN16 – All providers) Network Operator is SSE Power Distribution	0800 072 72 82 (24 hours) 105 Power Cut Information
Wessex Water www.wessexwater.co.uk	Emergencies 0345 600 4 600 Sewage Floodline 0845 850 5959 Burst Water Main 0800 692 0692
Environment Agency Floodline (to register for alerts and to hear alerts and river information)	0345 988 1188
Environment Agency Incident Line (to report flooding or river obstructions or other EA incidents)	0800 807 060
Wiltshire Council Highways (to report flooding)	0300 456 0105 localhighways@wiltshire.gov.uk
Wiltshire Council Emergency Planning	01225 713159 emergencyplanning@wiltshire.gov.uk
Met Office – Severe weather warnings	www.metoffice.gov.uk
Wessex Water Operational Enquiries (Fallen trees etc)	T: 0345 600 4600 E: operational.enquiries@wessexwater.co.uk

MEDICAL		
Ambulance	112 or 999	24 hour
Non-emergencies – NHS Direct	111	24 hour
Spa Medical Centre, Snowberry Lane, Melksham, Wiltshire, SN12 6UN	01225 703236	Monday to Friday 0800-1830
Giffords Surgery Spa Rd, Melksham, Wiltshire SN12 7EA	01225 896630	0830-1930 Monday & Tuesday 0830-1830 Wednesday - Friday.
Rowden Surgery, Chippenham	01249 444343	Monday to Friday 0800-1830
Wiltshire Primary Care Trust	111	
British Red Cross	01380 730131	
Chippenham Hospital (Minor Injuries)	01249 456403	7 days, 07.00 to 01.00

Contact list

	Name: Chris Doel
	Title: Flood Co-ordinator
	Tel Contact 01249 730318
	Email: chrisandjanetdoel@hotmail.co.uk
	Address: Reybridge House, Reybridge , SN15 2PF
	Name: Jane Durrant
	Title Flood Deputy Co-ordinator
	24hr telephone contact: 07739 750630
	Email: jane.durrant@lacockparishcouncil.gov.uk
	Address: Dolphins, The Wharf, Lacock, Wilts SN15 2PQ
	Name: Peter Glen
	Title Flood Deputy Co-ordinator
	24hr telephone contact: 07774 145060
	Email: peter.glen@lacockparishcouncil.gov.uk
	Address: 21 Bowden Hill, Lacock, SN15 2PW

River and Surface water data



The highlighted blue area shows Flood Zone 3 which is defined by the environment agency as

Floodplain:

A floodplain is the area that would naturally be affected by flooding if a river rises above its banks, or high tides and stormy seas cause flooding in coastal areas.


There are two different kinds of area shown on the Flood Map for Planning rivers and the sea. They can be described as follows:

- **Dark blue** ■ shows the area that could be affected by flooding, either from rivers or the sea, if there were no flood defences. This area could be flooded from a river by a flood that has a 1 per cent (1 in 100) or greater chance of happening each year.

Met Office Severe Weather Warning or Environment Agency Flood Warning	
Triggers	Actions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Severe weather is forecast from the Met Office. • Surface water flooding • Flooding of low lying land and roads adjacent to the river • Other local observation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flood Co-ordinator sees or hears Met Office Severe Weather Warning • Flood Co-ordinator contacts Deputy Co-ordinators (Telephone Tree). • Flood Co-ordinator monitor Met Office and Environment Agency's website (River Levels on the Internet) • Flood and Deputy Co-ordinators monitors areas prone to river or surface water flooding

Weather and flood risk forecasts


- Met Office weather forecast for
- Met Office weather warnings (national, select "South-West")
<http://www.metoffice.gov.uk/public/weather/warnings/>
- Environment Agency three-day flood risk forecast
<http://apps.environment-agency.gov.uk/flood/3days/125305.aspx>
- Environment Agency flood warning national summary Southwest
<http://apps.environment-agency.gov.uk/flood/34678.aspx?type=Region&term=Southwest&from=fl>

Flood Alert		
	What it means	When it is issued by the EA
		Flooding of low lying roads and land is possible.
Trigger	Actions	
EA site (ID)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flood Co-ordinator decides if Flood Alert trigger is activated. • Flood Co-ordinator also checks Met Office for severe weather warnings for (community) area. <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Flood Plan activated</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flood Co-ordinator calls Floodline for further information • Flood Co-ordinator contacts Deputy Co-ordinators (Telephone Tree). • Flood Co-ordinator contact National Trust (NT) Flood Co-ordinator • Community Volunteers monitor local water levels and drains. Community Volunteers inform at risk residents of flood alert. Advise that physical protection measures should be readied. • Community Volunteers report back to Flood Co-ordinator. • Flood Co-ordinator updates NT Co-ordinator • Flood Co-ordinator provide feedback on conditions to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Environment Agency Incident Line 0800 807 060 ○ Wiltshire Council 0300 456 0105 	

Environment Agency Flood Alert

To use Environment Agency Quick Dial:

- Dial EA Floodline 0345 988 1188
- Press 1 for warnings
- Hold the line
- When asked, enter the QuickDial number. 164163


Flood Warning		
	What it means	When it is issued by the EA
		Flooding of properties is expected
Triggers	Actions	
Warning received from met office Warning received from Environment Agency Aim to give 2 hours warning notice Local observation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flood Co-ordinator decides if Flood Warning trigger is activated. • Flood Co-ordinator alerts Deputies and NT Co-ordinator • Flood Co-ordinators coordinate activities of Community Volunteers/council staff • Flood Co-ordinator contact Parish Clerk or Deputy (see Telephone Tree) to advise rest centre's may need to be activated (Village Hall). • Distribute emergency planning information, advice and note requests for help and advice. • Community Volunteers monitor local water levels & provide feedback to Flood Co-ordinator or Deputies • Flood Co-ordinator provide feedback on conditions to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Environment Agency Incident Line 0800 807 060 ○ Wiltshire Council 0300 456 0105. • Provide liaison to the general public/erect information and or signage regarding the barriers and why they are there. • Assist EA and Wiltshire council highways where requested. • Community volunteers record and photograph the extent of flooding if safe. 	

Environment Agency Flood Warning

To use Environment Agency QuickDial:

- Dial EA Floodline 0345 988 1188
- Press 1 for warnings
- Hold the line

When asked, enter the QuickDial number. 164163

Severe Flood Warning		
	What it means	When it is issued by the EA
		Flooding of properties, danger to life, severe disruption to services and transport
Triggers	Actions	
<p>Met office indicates severe weather incident</p> <p>Received from Environment Agency (from monitoring point between Chippenham and Lacock)</p> <p>Will be issued dependent on issues on the ground.</p> <p>Local observations:-</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flood Co-ordinator decides if Severe Flood Warning trigger is activated. • Flood Co-ordinator informs NT Co-ordinator • Flood Co-ordinator liaise with Wiltshire Council Highway Duty Engineers (Nos) 0300 456 0105 localhighways@wiltshire.gov.uk • Notify Co-ordinator of any potentially vulnerable people who will advice Wiltshire Council and/or emergency services. • Community volunteers record and photograph if safe the extent of flooding. • Flood Co-ordinator assist Emergency Services by providing local knowledge about conditions. • Community volunteers support parish council in opening and setting up rest centre and continued support to Wiltshire Council if required. • Community Volunteers assist Wiltshire council in manning road closure points if required. 	

Environment Agency Flood Warning

To use Environment Agency QuickDial:

- Dial EA Floodline 0345 988 1188
- Press 1 for warnings
- Hold the line
- When asked, enter the QuickDial number. 164163

Warning No Longer in Force

Triggers	Actions
<p>Met office warning level reduced</p> <p>Or local observation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Rivers back in bank, levels falling and no significant rain forecast• Rivers back below trigger levels that activated initial warning• Alerts issued but no resultant flooding and forecast improved	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Flood Co-ordinator ensures that NT Co-ordinator and Community volunteers are aware that warning is no longer in force.• Flood coordinator collates information gathered by volunteers to submit to the Environment Agency. (NT Co-ordinator collates information regarding NT properties).• Advise at risk people that flood warning is no longer in force.• Assist / support flood victims with information, including safe procedures for cleaning up.• Community volunteers and flood plan committee meet to review incident what went well, what not so well and any amendments to plan required.

Flood Telephone Tree

Met Office Severe
weather warning or EA
Flood Warning issued

National Trust
Co-ordinator
Sonya McMillan
01249 730141

Co-ordinator
Chris Doel D 07793
636426

Deputy Co-ordinator
Peter Glen

Deputy Co-ordinator
Jane Durrant

Parish Clerk
Lana Steward

Community Volunteers
Bob Durrant
Andy Coles

Community Volunteers
Paul Maloney
Peter Glenn

Wiltshire Council
Highways
0300 456 0105

Environment Agency
0845 988 1188 Opt 4

Local Skills and Resources Assessment

Skill / Resource	Who?	Contact details	Location
Community volunteers	<i>Area – Bowden Hill</i>		
	Paul Maloney	07828 581851 01249 730308	The Bell Inn, The Wharf, Lacock
	<i>Area – Bowden Hill</i>		
	Andy Coles	07766 953722	16 Bewley Lane, Lacock
	<i>Area – Bowden Hill</i>		
	Bob Durrant	07732 855834	Dolphins, The Wharf. Lacock
	<i>Area – Bowden Hill</i>		
	Peter Glen	07774 145060	The Old PostOffice, Bowden Hill, Lacock
4x4 Owners / Drivers	<i>Area – Village Hall</i>		
	Gillian Ballinger	01249 730402	8 East Street, Lacock SN15 2LF
Flood Signs	Wessex 4x4 UK response	www.wessex4x4response.org.uk 07092 870604	Wiltshire
Gel sacs	Jane Durrant	07739 750630	Dolphins, The Wharf, Lacock
	Chris Doel	07793 636426	
Suppliers of sand and sandbags	Jane Durrant	07739 750630	Dolphins, The Wharf, Lacock
	Nurdens Build Base	01225 791666	Bowerhill Industrial Estate, 31 Lysnder Road, Bowerhill, Melksham, Wiltshire SN12 6SS
	Jewson	01249 653351	Bath Road Ind Estate Chippenham, Wiltshire, SN14 0AB
Dehumidifiers	Travis Perkins	01249 653365	65a Sheldon Road Chippenham Wiltshire SN14 0BU
	Artisan Hire Centre	01225 706806	17 Lancaster Rd, Bowerhill, Melksham SN12 6SS
Plant & Generator Hire	Universal Tool Hire	01225 707788	14 Lysander Rd, Bowerhill, Melksham SN12 6SP
	Nurdens Plant Hire	01666 826 118	The Garden Centre Crudwell Road Malmesbury Wiltshire` SN16 9JL
	Artisan Hire Centre	01225 706806	17 Lancaster Rd, Bowerhill, Melksham SN12 6SS

	Universal Tool Hire	01225 707788	14 Lysander Rd, Bowerhill, Melksham SN12 6SP
Accommodation			
Voluntary groups within the community	Heather Shepherd – Covid Volunteer List	These can help in identifying and contacting vulnerable residents	

Local Flood Risk Assessment

Risks	Impact on community	What can be done to prepare?
<p>Flooding to: Local business or property</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business cease to trade, • Homeowners have to move out of their homes. • Negative impact to community, to prospective residents and businesses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage residents to sign up to Environment Agency Flood Alert Scheme 0345 988 1188. • Encourage residents/business to sign up for Met office warnings. • Encourage residents to find out if they are at risk of flooding and to take steps to make them more resilient • Report any local flooding to Wiltshire Council Highways 0300 456 0105 (24 hours) • Find out what flood defences exist or are planned in the area. • Encourage residents/business at risk of flooding to install resistance and/or resilience measures. • Educate children not to play in flood water. • Identify vulnerable people in the area. • Prepare for distribution of flood warnings and any evacuation and rest centre establishment required.
<p>Obstructions in river – branches, reeds, rubbish.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As above and additionally: • Organise the clearance of river/watercourses and banks of obstructions if appropriate • Encourage landowners to maintain watercourses
<p>Debris in drainage ditches</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As above and additionally: • Encourage owners of property with ditches/watercourses to maintain watercourses. • Liaise with Wiltshire Council and Wessex Water on drainage.

Ditches

There are a number of ditches which fill up and cause flooding in the parish. These are listed below.

Ditch	Action Required
Bowden hill heading down from St Annes church to Bowden Common	Regular clearance required to prevent flood water cascading down road after heavy rain and causing damage to road surface or risk to life in icy conditions.
The Wharf from Mead Farm to bridge	Regular clearance to prevent filling up with debris .
Bewley Lane from Stoggy Lane	Ditch opposite number 6 Bewley Lane – additional drainage pipe from bottom of Stoggy Lane into ditch was installed after major flooding of Number 6 and adjacent property. Ditch to be kept clear as well as pipe entrance into ditch. Drain halfway up Stoggy Lane to be kept clear – fills with mud and stones draining down from Stoggy Lane and adjacent fields.
Bewley Lane junction with Naish Hill	Under review with OFWG Jan 2019 – removal of hedges and ditches in fields up Naish Hill have resulted in significant flooding at time of heavy rain and major damage to the road.
Naish Hill	Regular clearance required to prevent flood water cascading down road after heavy rain and causing damage to road surface or risk to life in icy conditions
Mons Lane	Regular clearance required to prevent flood water cascading down road after heavy rain and causing damage to road surface or risk to life in icy conditions
Cantax Hill / Cantax bridge	Culvert under A350 to be regularly cleared of weeds and dirt.

Community Volunteer Guide

This Guide has been put together principally from information provided by the Environment Agency and Wiltshire Council.

Community Volunteer Role Summary

	Community Volunteers DO	Community Volunteers DO NOT
BEFORE A FLOOD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand flood risk within their local area • Identify properties at risk of flooding • Identify vulnerable individuals • Support community plan training and activities • Help raise flood awareness • Assist with the recruitment of Flood Volunteers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DO NOT have property liable to flooding themselves • DO NOT attempt to enter or clear watercourses or culverts
DURING A FLOOD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prioritise their own safety at all times • Follow procedures set out in their Flood Plan • Relay information to the local community • Assist with the distribution of sand bags / gel sacs • Follow guidance from the emergency services at all times • Assist Wiltshire Council in manning road closure points if required. • Provide the emergency services with local knowledge and information • Collect information about the flood including photos if safe to do so • Support parish council in opening and setting up rest centre if required. • Remove yourself and notify flood co-ordinator if flood worsens. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DO NOT help residents move their belongings • DO NOT attempt to deal with argumentative or aggressive people themselves • DO NOT place themselves at risk at any time • DO NOT enter flood water at any time • DO NOT attempt to operate or repair flood defence structures or equipment that they have not been trained or authorised to use
AFTER A FLOOD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submit information they have collected about the flood • Help to relay information to the local community • Support their community • Contribute in incident review after a flood 	

Community volunteer Role Profile

The information contained within this general role profile or job description is intended to clarify a Community Volunteer actions before, during and after a flood event. Importantly, this profile also outlines the limits of your role and responsibilities. Remember, your overall role is to support the community and not to carry out the job of the Emergency Services.

In undertaking any activities not described in this role profile you may not be covered by any insurance policy provided for you and your group.

Your role BEFORE a flood

Understand flood risk within your local area

The risk of flooding that your community faces changes over time. New buildings, roads and even farming and land use practices can affect flood risk. Watercourses, culverts and drains can be affected by debris that could restrict their flow. Keep aware of how changes within your local environment may impact on the risk of flooding.

You can play an important role by acting as the "eyes and ears" of the local authorities. Report any debris in watercourses or culverts to your group co-ordinator and/or the local flood risk authorities in accordance with procedures in your community plan.

Identify properties at risk of flooding

Some properties are at greater risk of flooding than others. Knowing which properties are more likely to flood and possible flow routes of flood water can help you to become better prepared for an emergency. To help, take a look at a flood risk map of your local area. Consider which properties have flooded in the past. Also, look for properties in low lying areas or close to watercourses.

Identify vulnerable individuals

Your strength as a community volunteer is your detailed knowledge of your local area and the people living within it. Build up an understanding of who lives in your area and especially anyone who may require priority attention during a flood such as the elderly or less mobile.

Once you have identified vulnerable individuals within your community email the information to Lacockflood@gmail.com, the parish council manage a list of vulnerable individuals.

Support community plan training and activities

You are encouraged to take part in any training for Community Volunteers. This is to provide you with information to help you to carry out your role in a safe and responsible way. The training will be updated and repeated on a regular basis.

Your Flood Plan forms the basis of your community's response to flood risk. You should familiarise yourself with the contents of the plan and how to respond during a flood. You should always follow the guidance and advice set out in the plan as well as any training you have received to ensure you do not place yourself or others at unnecessary risk. If procedures within your Flood Plan contradict any activities described in this role profile highlight them to your Flood Co-ordinator who will be able to clarify the situation.

Your group of community volunteers might meet on a regular basis to discuss issues related to flooding in the local community. You are encouraged to attend these meetings, where possible, to keep up to date with developments and issues.

Help raise flood awareness

Helping to raise flood awareness within the community is an important activity within a community plan. Households and businesses may benefit from useful information such as; how to prepare for flooding, steps to protect property and emergency contacts. You may be asked to help with the door-to-door distribution of leaflets and newsletters, for example.

Assist with the recruitment of Community Volunteers

As a member of the community you may be ideally placed to identify other people with the enthusiasm, skills and attitude to support the community during a flood. If you know of anyone suitable to be a volunteer refer them to your Flood Co-ordinator.

DO NOT have property liable to flooding yourself

In the event of a flood you need to be fully available to fulfil your responsibilities as a Flood Volunteer. This is not compatible with having a property that itself is liable to flooding.

DO NOT attempt to enter or clear watercourses or culverts

Report any debris in watercourses or culverts to your Flood Co-ordinator and/or the local flood risk authorities in accordance with your Flood Plan. Do not place yourself at risk of injury or harm by attempting to enter or unblock watercourses or culverts yourself.

Your role DURING a flood

Prioritise your own safety at all times

Your priority at all times is to ensure your own safety and not to place yourself at unnecessary risk of injury or harm. If conditions become unsafe remove yourself to safety and notify flood co-ordinator.

Follow procedures set out in your community plan

The procedures set out in your community plan are there to ensure a co-ordinated response from the community in the event of a flood. They are also there to promote your wellbeing and that of others.

Relay information to the local community

The Emergency Services, local authorities or the Environment Agency may call upon your assistance to relay information to the community. This may be to warn the public of a potential flood and particular areas to avoid or to provide information to promote health and wellbeing. This would involve door-to-door visits to engage with individual properties.

Assist with the distribution of sand bags / gel sacs

Many community plans provide support through the distribution of sand bags or gel sacs. When filling, distributing or installing these, always follow the advice and guidance set out in your training over correct procedures and manual handling.

Follow guidance from the emergency services at all times

The Emergency Services and the Police in particular take the lead during a flood event. Follow their advice at all times as you may be placing yourself and others at risk of harm if you do not. Remember, you are not a member of the uniformed emergency services. If you are told to evacuate from an area follow the guidance you are given.

Provide the emergency services with local knowledge and information

Your strength as a local Community volunteer is your detailed knowledge of your local area and the people living within it. Relay this information to the Emergency Services during a flood. Be mindful the information may relate to individual properties or persons and should be managed responsibly at all times.

Collect information about the flood

Information you collect and record during a flood can be important to the Environment Agency and other authorities when analysing the cause and how to reduce risk in the future. Notes and especially photographs on flow routes and water levels can be very useful.

DO NOT help residents move their belongings

While attending to your responsibilities as a Flood Volunteer people might expect you to help move property with them. Make it clear to people that this is not your responsibility and you have other duties to attend to. A volunteer is there to provide advice and co-ordinate the response effort, not to get physically involved.

DO NOT try to deal with argumentative or aggressive people yourself

When under stress, such as that from flooding, people can become irrational and aggressive. Always approach people in a civil, polite manner, clearly explaining what role you hold and how/if you can help. If they become aggressive in anyway, leave them alone and do not attempt to help unless approached and asked specifically.

DO NOT place yourself at risk at any time

Your safety is a priority. Follow the guidance set out in your training and do not undertake activities that may place yourself at unnecessary risk.

DO NOT enter flood water at any time

Flood water poses many different risks and dangers including; trips, slips, contamination, drowning and injury from submerged hazards. Do not enter flood waters.

DO NOT attempt to operate or repair flood defence structures or equipment that you have not been trained or authorised to use.

The unauthorised use of flood defence equipment could increase the risk of flooding or hide problems that should be addressed by the relevant authority. Similarly, do not use any equipment you have not been trained or authorised to use.

Your role AFTER a flood

Submit information you collected about the flood

Information you collect and record during a flood can be important to the Environment Agency and other authorities when analysing the cause of the flooding and how to reduce risk in the future. Submit your information to your Flood Co-ordinator.

Help to relay information to the local community

You may be able to support your community by relaying useful information after a flood. Newsletters and door-to-door visits can help keep people informed after an emergency. Information may relate to personal safety, hygiene, insurance claims or the risk of further flooding.

Support your community

It can take many months for individuals, households and businesses to recover from flooding and return to normal daily life. This recovery process can be stressful and impact upon people in different ways. As a member of the community you may be able to provide support to those affected. Refer members of your community to a suitable authority or expert for further guidance and advice.

This section of the community volunteer guide is intended to highlight the possible hazards and dangers that you could encounter while performing your duties. Below is a list of hazards, with an explanation of what they are and how they can be avoided .

Drowning

Common perception is that drowning occurs in deep water such as a main river, when in actual fact a person could easily drown in just an inch of water. It is also worth bearing in mind that 15cm (6in) of flowing water is all it takes to sweep an adult off their feet. This is particularly relevant when entering flooded fields near to a river where the water could still be flowing. The Environment Agency advises all Community Volunteers against the practice of entering floodwaters of any description. You should only carry out your duties if you can do so without the need to get wet.

Contamination

Disposal of contaminated equipment - After a flood there is a high probability that equipment used, such as sandbags, will be contaminated with sewage and pollutants. Disposal of these items needs careful consideration. If you think that the items used have been contaminated then you are advised to contact the local council for information and disposal. The EA booklet 'After a flood' also contains useful advice.

Leptospirosis - Two types of leptospirosis infection can affect people in the UK. Weil's disease is a serious and sometimes fatal infection that is transmitted to humans by contact with urine from infected rats. The Hardjo form of leptospirosis is transmitted from cattle to humans.

The main people at risk are Volunteers who are exposed to rats, rat or cattle urine or to fetal fluids from cattle. Volunteers in contact with canal and river water are at possible risk and farmers are now the main group at risk for both types of the disease. Other people who have contracted leptospirosis in recent years include vets, butchers, abattoir and sewer workers.

Getting rid of rats and not touching them with unprotected hands can prevent infection. It is important to cover all cuts and broken skin with waterproof plasters before and during your duties. Wash your hands after handling any animal or coming into contact with river water and always before eating, drinking or smoking. Leptospirosis is much less severe if treated promptly.

Hypothermia

Hypothermia is caused by getting too cold. It is a condition in which your normal body temperature of 37°C (98.6°F) drops below 35°C (95°F). This is most common in cold environments, and the risk is increased if you are not wearing enough layers to keep warm, or do not have your head covered (the largest proportion of body heat is lost through the head). Hypothermia is also possible in mild weather. For example, if you get soaked in a rain shower and do not dry off properly soon afterwards, particularly if there is also a cool wind. The water evaporating from your skin brings down your body temperature.

If the weather is cold, make sure you're dressed appropriately before you go outside. Layers of clothing trap air, which helps to keep you warm. Tightly woven, waterproof clothes are best. Drink plenty of fluids and hot drinks (not alcohol) and eat regular, balanced meals to give you energy.

As a community volunteer you should return home immediately, and cease your duties, if you start to show signs of hypothermia. Please remember to listen to the advice of other

residents and volunteers, as they may see you showing signs of hypothermia before you realise the onset of it.

Hostile situations

When under stress, such as that from flooding, people can become irrational and aggressive. Always approach people in a civil, polite manner, clearly explaining your role and how you can help. If they become aggressive in anyway, leave them alone and do not attempt to help unless approached and asked specifically. If they require emergency assistance contact the emergency services.

Manual handling

While attending to your responsibilities as a community volunteer people might expect you to help move property with them. Make it clear to people you must attend to your main responsibilities first. You need to remember that you are primarily there to provide advice and co-ordinate the response effort, not to get physically involved. As part of your plan it is a good idea to identify a group of willing volunteers who are trained and familiar with manual lifting techniques.

Other hazards

Slips, trips and falls - Try not to walk on uneven or slippery ground and always wear sturdy, appropriate footwear.

Livestock - Are unpredictable in behaviour and can be very dangerous, especially if under stress. Only approach livestock with a trained person (i.e. a farmer), and again, only if you feel it is safe to do so.

Traffic - During flooding people will want to remove people and property away from the affected area as quickly as possible, and will not always be concentrating on their driving and the road ahead. Poor driving conditions and decreased visibility in bad weather will often exacerbate this problem. Also watch out for vehicles being driven excessively fast through floodwaters. You should always wear a high visibility jacket and take extra care when crossing roads and thoroughfares. Watch out for manhole covers that have been 'blown' off, a stout stick can be used as an aid to balance and to probe shallow water.

Roads might become severely flooded and will need to be closed to through traffic. This usually falls under the responsibility of the police, district council or the Highways Agency. But often a community volunteer can place a 'Flood' sign close to the road more easily and quickly. Check with your coordinator regarding this.

Community Volunteers Legal Responsibilities and Advice

As a community emergency volunteer you do not receive payment. The contract, if any, is solely between the Parish Council and the community volunteer. There is no employment contract between a community volunteer and the Environment Agency or Wiltshire council. The community volunteer is advised how to carry out their duties by the parish council.

Insurance

Community emergency volunteers are covered by the Parish Council insurance as long as:-
The volunteer is wearing a high visibility jacket

- The volunteer is acting wholly under the instruction of the parish council

If damage is caused by a Community volunteer, who is liable?

As you will be acting as agents of Lacock Parish Council, it is implied that the Parish Council indemnifies you against liability arising from your actions unless you act negligently. All Community Volunteers should check the Parish Council insurance policy to ensure they are covered against liability for their actions.

It should be stressed that in an emergency situation it is likely that a Community Volunteers will be under considerable pressure. By taking reasonable care, and following the agreed actions laid out in the Flood Plan and associated documents, the Volunteer should be protected against civil claims. The best endeavours principle would normally apply. Only where negligence is shown to be malicious could a Volunteer be found to be at fault. The standard parish council insurance coverage is usually valid against this sort of claim. LPC insurance will cover this.

What if a Flood Volunteer is injured?

As mentioned it is important to check whether you are indemnified against personal injury within the Parish Council insurance policy. The Environment Agency or Wiltshire Council will not be liable for community volunteer injuries unless the injury arose due to our negligence. The parish council will never ask a community volunteer to carry out any duties that would place them in danger.

What if a Community Volunteer fails to give a warning?

It is important to remember that the Environment Agency has a power, rather than a duty, to give flood warnings, and the same principle also applies to a Community Volunteer. In English law, a failure to act does not normally attract liability. Therefore, as the law stands, it is unlikely that you would be liable for any damage that arose from the Volunteer failing to warn a member of the public of an impending flood. This would not be the case though if it could be proved that the Community Volunteer purposefully withheld information from the public in the event of a flood, and as a direct result, an individual incurred additional damage caused by the flood.

It should be noted that the legal distinction between failing to act and acting has never been part of European law. The coming into force of the Human Rights Act 1998 does make it more likely that the courts will seek to blur this distinction in English law. As of yet, no court cases have been brought against Community Volunteers in order to test this theory.

Please be assured that it is highly unlikely that any court will prosecute a Community Volunteer as a consequence of their actions as long as the Volunteer acted in good faith and with good intentions.

Roles And Responsibilities of Authorities

The level of service offered by local authorities varies from district to district. Local authorities do not have a statutory duty to provide sandbags or give other assistance at times of flooding. But they will usually endeavour to help, particularly in cases of emergency. Most local authorities take the threat seriously and will put aside adequate resources to help combat the risk of flooding. However resources are limited and the view of most authorities on residential flooding is that householders should take measures to protect their own properties from flooding .

In some locations, where there is a known flood risk, the parish council holds a limited supply of gel sacs for distribution at times of emergency. They are used to divert water flows and protect property. Often the flood community volunteers will coordinate this when a flood warning has been received.

Roadside ditches

The maintenance of these is normally the responsibility of the adjoining landowner (riparian owner) and not the highway authority. If road flooding occurs as a result of blockages in these ditches the highway authority may use its legal powers to require the riparian owner to clear the ditch.

Land drainage

Local councils are the local land drainage authority for non-main rivers, but the maintenance of most watercourses is the responsibility of private owners (riparian owners) or of the local water supplier. The council has no responsibility for the maintenance of watercourses and land drainage (except on council-owned land). However, they may be able to offer general advice. The Environment Agency may undertake maintenance of some main river sections, however the responsibility is still with the riparian owner.

Other

Public surface water sewers - these are drainage . systems, usually piped, which are maintained by the water supplier. However, it is possible that the water supplier and waste disposal authorities are different organisations.

Highway drains - culverts under public roads, piped roadside ditches or other drainage that has been specifically built to-drain the highway. The highway authority maintains these.

Authorities involved

The following organisations may be involved in direct specific action during a flooding event. Property owners are listed as it is their responsibility to protect their own property from flooding

Environment Agency

- Maintain flood defences
- Issuing flood warnings
- Receiving and recording details of all flooding incidents
- Monitoring the situation and advising other organisations
- Dealing with emergency repairs and blockages on main rivers and own structures.

Wiltshire Council

- Co-ordinating emergency arrangements
- Maintaining safe conditions on the roads
- Putting flood warning signs on the roads
- Organising road closures and traffic diversions
- Clearing blockages on highway drainage systems
- Protect property from flooding by water from the highway (optional)

- Emergency assistance - providing sandbags (optional)
- Clearing blocked watercourses etc. (Land Drainage Act powers)
- Environmental health issues - pollution

Lacock Parish Council

- Preparation of Flood Plan and organisation of Community Volunteers
- Flood warning dissemination (by local agreement with Environment Agency)
- Provision of gel sacs and other emergency equipment (if in stock)

National Trust

- Flood warning dissemination to tenants
- Provision of sand bags (if available) and other emergency equipment
- Organisation of Community Volunteers.

Fire and rescue service

- Rescue
- Responding to all emergency incidents as required
- Assisting the populace where a need is identified and the use of fire service personnel and equipment is relevant.

Water company

- Emergency overpumping or tankering at pumping stations
- Clearing blockages in public sewers and outfall grills
- Repairing burst sewage and water pumping mains.

Property owners

The principal actions of owners of property at risk of flooding or which is flooded are:

- Moving to a safe area if life is at risk
- Preventing water from entering property if possible
- Switching off electricity and gas supplies at mains
- Moving valuable possessions above floor areas liable to be flooded.